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Shaping the Byzantine Chanting Tradition of Thessaloniki: The Constantinopolitans' Impact in the First Half of the 20th Century

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Shaping the Byzantine Chanting Tradition of Thessaloniki: The Constantinopolitans' Impact in the First Half of the 20th Century¹

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Abstract: This paper attempts to highlight the significant role of Constantinopolitan chanters in the development of the Greek Orthodox church music of Thessaloniki. Due to historical circumstances, a large number of chanters from Constantinople arrived successively in the region of Thessaloniki during the first half of the 20th century. Their higher music education and undisputed chanting experience made them rapidly notorious. They were very much appreciated by church commissioners, who often hired them for church services. Their contribution is also certified in the domains of Byzantine music teaching, book and newspaper publishing, while at the same time they were very socially active, by supporting many local cultural or artistic unions and charity organisations. The dominant presence of the Constantinopolitan chanters gave a new meaning to the ecclesiastical life of Thessaloniki, changing the people's perception towards the liturgical music of the Greek Orthodox church. Most of the material examined for this paper derives from the archives of the Chanters Union of Thessaloniki (Σωματείο Ιεροψαλτών Θεσσαλονίκης 'Ιωάννης ο Δαμασκηνός'), established in 1903, and also from private archives of long gone Constantinopolitan chanters. Furthermore, other known basic methods of research in the field, such as interviews and participant observation, were implemented.

Keywords: Constantinopolitan chanters, chanting tradition of Thessaloniki, Greek Orthodox church music.

¹ The author would like to thank the Organising Committee of the International Musicological Conference *Modus-Modi-Modality*, held at Nicosia, Cyprus, on September 6-10, 2017. The subject of this paper is more thoroughly addressed in the author's ongoing dissertation, *Byzantine chanting life in Thessaloniki during the 19th and 20th centuries, from historical sources*, in the Department of Music Studies at the Ionian University in Corfu, Greece.

A. Definitions

The term 'Constantinopolitans' refers to Greek Orthodox immigrants from Constantinople, mainly cantors or chanters (*psaltes*), but also priests, church board members or commissioners, and generally connoisseurs and admirers or devotees of liturgical music, who arrived in Thessaloniki successively, during the first half of the 20th century. The tragic consequences of the general political turbulence and war conflicts in the Ottoman Empire, during the first quarter of the 20th century led to the deportations of Greek Orthodox populations from the Black Sea and Asia Minor. That, in turn, set the stage for the Constantinopolitan migration, that followed the vast waves of refugees from Pontos and Smyrna, who had first tried to seek shelter in Constantinople. It started around the beginning of the 1920's and went on for three decades, until the final wave of the deported Constantinopolitans in 1965.

Throughout the Ottoman period, Thessaloniki managed to preserve its special Byzantine chanting tradition, which was part of a unique local music culture, given the city's crossroad position in the Balkans and its mixed population of Jews, Turks and Greeks. This was basically made possible by maintaining the existent musical connection with Constantinople, evidence of which can be found in the numerous entries of chanters from Thessaloniki, which appear in the subscriber lists of many music editions of the 19th and 20th century, published in Constantinople.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the contribution of the Constantinopolitan immigrants to the development of the ecclesiastical music tradition of Thessaloniki in the 20th century. The primary material examined derives from unpublished archives of Constantinopolitan chanters, which were entrusted to the author by their families, along with interviews of their descendants and students, and also from data related to Constantinopolitans sourced from the historical Chanters Union of Thessaloniki 'Ioannis o Damaskinos', with the permission of its board of trustees. To all of them the author is deeply grateful. Given the specific time frame, the author's options were limited to a list of prominent personalities, who arrived in Thessaloniki until the mid 1930s. The available information for each one of them isn't the same, but it is decisive enough and leads to safe conclusions. The chanters are Dimitrios Vafeiadis (1874-late 1950's), Themistoklis Georgiadis (1880's-1946), Konstantinos Mpekiaris (1881-late 1950's), Sokratis Papadopoulos (1884-1953), Konstantinos Pringos (1892-1964), Georgios Daffas (1903-1986), and Athanasios Panagiotidis (1910-1989).

B. The Constantinopolitans' identity

The identity of the Constantinopolitans is defined by certain characteristics, which are linked to their life in Constantinople. The first and most obvious is their common geographical origin, for they were born during the late 19th and early 20th century in Constantinople or its environs. The majority of them was of middle-class descent and

their families belonged to the wealthy and educated Greek Orthodox community, which had already started to emerge socially in the 19th century, not only in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, but also in other urban centres, such as Thessaloniki.² Another important mutual feature of all Constantinopolitan families, literate or illiterate, was the observance of Greek Orthodox traditions and religious obligations, which included frequent church visiting and fasting.³ Some were lucky enough to have a cantor or a priest in the family, who was usually their first informal music teacher. That was for example the case for Sokratis Papadopoulos, who was the son of a priest.⁴

Most Constantinopolitans, regardless of their family's financial and social status, received a higher music education, especially related to Byzantine chant, which was officially introduced in 1897 in all Greek Orthodox community schools of Constantinople.⁵ Many of them were students of the four-year Music School of the Ecclesiastical Musical Society of Constantinople, which was hosted in the Great School of the Nation, in the Phanar district. Most of the students, 124 out of 193 for the academic year 1901-1902, were at the same time attending the Great School of the Nation as school students.⁶ It must be noted that there were absolutely no tuition fees necessary for acceptance in the Music School.⁷ Konstantinos Mpekiaris was among the very first twelve of its graduates in 1901, Dimitrios Vafeiadis graduated next year first in his class with honours and Sokratis Papadopoulos followed in 1903.⁸ In the early 1910's was the turn of Konstantinos Pringos to visit the Music School,⁹ from which Georgios Daffas graduated with distinction in 1923. Most of them were fortunate to be taught by some of the greatest music teachers, including the famous

² Merih Erol, "The 'Musical Question' and the Educated Elite of Greek Orthodox Society in Late Nineteenth-Century Constantinople," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 32, no. 1 (May 2014): 135-138.

³ Αντώνιος Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία στην Εκκλησία της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατά το 19ο και 20ό αιώνα" (PhD diss., Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2001), 33.

⁴ Παναγιώτης Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική* (Αθήνα, 1956), 136.

⁵ Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία," 56.

⁶ Παπαδόπουλος, "Λογοδοσία απαγγελθείσα κατά την τελετήν της επιδόσεως των απολυτηρίων εις τους μαθητάς της Εκκλησιαστικής Μουσικής Σχολής του Συλλόγου, τη 19 Μαΐου 1902 εν τη πατριαρχική Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή," *Παράρτημα Εκκλησιαστικής Αλήθειας* 5 (1 Νοεμβρίου 1902): 283.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 282, 285.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 282-283; 304-305; 300-301. See also "Πρακτικά των συνεδριάσεων του Εκκλησιαστικού Μουσικού Συλλόγου," *Παράρτημα Εκκλησιαστικής Αλήθειας* 5 (1 Νοεμβρίου 1902): 72, 74, 79.

⁹ Σταμάτης Παπαμανωλάκης, "Κωνσταντίνος Πρίγγος: Αρχων Πρωτοψάλτης της Μεγάλης του Χριστού Εκκλησίας 1892-1964," in *Οι Ψάλτες του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου*, ed. Σύνδεσμος των εν Αθήναις Μεγαλοσχολιτών (Αθήνα: Γ. Αργυρόπουλος, 1996), 54; Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία," 234.

Iakovos Nafpliotis and Nileas Kamarados. Daffas is depicted, standing first from the left, among the graduates of the 1922-1923 academic year, along with Nafpliotis and other teachers, in a rare photograph (figure 1) kept in the Friends of Music Club of Pera. His preserved Music School Diploma (figure 2) reveals the school's study programme and the entire administrative and teaching personnel. After the closure of the Musical School of Phanar in 1925, the Theological School of Chalki took its place as the Greek Orthodox music educational institution. Athanasios Panagiotidis was instructed, during his stay in Chalki (1923-1927), by the known music teacher Georgios Progakis.¹⁰

Constantinopolitan schoolboys were often appointed as choristers (*canonarchs*) in church parishes.¹¹ Konstantinos Pringos served, already at the age of ten, as first *canonarch* to Eustratios Papadopoulos in the church of Panagia in the district of Pera, while Athanasios Panagiotidis was in 1919 *canonarch* to the known teacher Dimitrios Mpalampanis in Hagios Konstantinos church in Hypsomatheia.¹² By practicing on the lectern (*analogion*) at a very early age and on a regular basis, the Constantinopolitans received the proper phonetic instruction (*akousmata*), by famous first-cantors (*protopsaltae*). Those church musicians had themselves been students of an able group of predecessors, which were known as the loyal transmitters of the vocal tradition of Greek Orthodox liturgical music.¹³ As a result, they managed to acquire the specific chanting manner or style (*hyphos*) of Constantinople, or even better that of the Great Church of Christ, for those fortunate to have practiced in the patriarchal church of Hagios Georgios in Phanar, like Pringos and Panagiotidis, second *domesticus* in 1911-1913 and *canonarch* in 1920-1923 respectively, of the great teacher and *Archon Protopsaltis* of the Great Church Iakovos Nafpliotis.¹⁴ Finally, the most vocally gifted and experienced of them, were hired as chanters in several churches. Graduates of the Music School were often preferred from parish board members as candidates for a certain position, like Konstantinos Mpekiaris and his classmates, who all twelve of them were appointed to churches in Constantinople.¹⁵ More specifically, Dimitrios Vafeiadis, who appears in several subscribers lists

¹⁰ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 133. Αστέριος Δεβερελής, *Μνήμες: Περιγραφή των παιδιόθεν και μέχρι βαθέος γήρατός μου γεγονότων* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Π. & Ι. Μουγκός, 2016), 17.

¹¹ Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία," 34-35. For the hierarchy in chanters and the various officials who serve in the two choirs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate see Άγγελος Βουδούρης, *Οι μουσικοί χοροί της Μεγάλης του Χριστού Εκκλησίας κατά τους κάτω χρόνους* (Κωνσταντινούπολη, 1935), 3-19.

¹² Παπαμανωλάκης, "Κωνσταντίνος Πρίγγος," 54-55. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 133.

¹³ Erol, "The Musical Question," 154.

¹⁴ Παπαμανωλάκης, "Κωνσταντίνος Πρίγγος," 54. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 141, 133.

¹⁵ Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία," 218. Παπαδόπουλος, "Λογοδοσία," 282-283.

among the chanters of Constantinople, was second or left choir cantor in Hagios Ioannis ton Chion church in Galata, and first or right choir cantor in Hagia Kyriaki church in Kontoskalion.¹⁶ He also served as a tactical member of the Ecclesiastical Musical Society of Constantinople, attending its monthly meetings and as a member of its Periodical's Committee during the school year 1920-1921.¹⁷ Themistoklis Georgiadis is also cited among the chanters of Constantinople in 1904.¹⁸ Konstantinos Mpekiaris was first hired in Zoodochos Pigi church of the National Orphanage in Eptapyrgion, then moved to Analipsi church in Hypsomatheia, and later in the Metochion of the Holy Sepulchre Hagia Triada church in Chalkedon, where he actually maintained a chorus of forty children, as director of the local Music School.¹⁹ Sokratis Papadopoulos' name also appears among the known chanters of Constantinople, where he additionally worked as a teacher in various schools of the Greek Orthodox community.²⁰ Konstantinos Pringos served in various churches of Constantinople before his eight-year migration to Greece; more precisely in Hagioi Dodeka Apostoloi church of Feriköy as second cantor in 1908-1909, in Hagia Triada church of Pera as first *domesticus* in 1909-1911, second cantor in 1915-1916 and first cantor in 1917-1925, and in Hagios Dimitrios church of Tatavla as first cantor in 1913-1915.²¹ Finally, Georgios Daffas, according to a testimony of the later *Archon Protipsaltis* Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas, was hired as *domesticus* to the first cantor Georgios Gavriilidis in Hagios Nikolaos church of Galata in 1926-1932.²² It is interesting to note that the relatively older Constantinopolitan chanters, that this paper is dealing with, namely Vafeiadis, Georgiadis, Mpekiaris and Papadopoulos are all listed as pupils of Nileas Kamarados.²³ On the other hand, the younger ones, that is Pringos, Daffas and

¹⁶ Ευστράτιος Παπαδόπουλος, *Εν τη εκκλησιαστική μουσική* (Αθήνα: Σπυρίδωνος Κουσουλίνου, 1903), 101. Γεώργιος Παπαδόπουλος, *Ιστορική επισκόπησις της Βυζαντινής εκκλησιαστικής μουσικής* (Αθήνα: Πραξιτέλους, 1904), 260. Παπαδόπουλος, "Λογοδοσία," 304-305. Αγαθάγγελος Κυριαζίδης, *Αι δύο μέλισσαι*, vol. 2 (Κωνσταντινούπολη: Πατριαρχικό Τυπογραφείο, 1906), 713.

¹⁷ "Πρακτικά συνεδριάσεων," 71, 97. See also *Αναλυτικόν Πρόγραμμα των εν ταις εν Φαναρίω, Σταυροδρομίω και Κοντοσκαλίω Εκκλησιαστικαίς Μουσικαίς Σχολαίς του εν τοις Πατριαρχείοις Εκκλησιαστικού Μουσικού Συλλόγου διδασθησομένων μαθημάτων κατά το σχολικόν έτος 1920-1921* (Κωνσταντινούπολη: Α. Αναστασιάδου, 1921), 14.

¹⁸ Παπαδόπουλος, *Ιστορική επισκόπησις*, 265.

¹⁹ Παπαδόπουλος, "Λογοδοσία," 283. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 168.

²⁰ Παπαδόπουλος, *Εν τη εκκλησιαστική μουσική*, 101.

²¹ Παπαμανωλάκης, "Κωνσταντίνος Πρίγγος," 54-55. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 141.

²² "Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas' interview to Dimitrios Sourlatzis at the house of Maria Oikonomou in Thessaloniki, 1982." Published on May 2, 2015. Accessed August 5, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgGHYQSKKv4&feature=youtu.be>. Part concerning Daffas at 25:51.

Panagiotidis who were about twenty to thirty years old, are all cited as being students and really close to the circles of Iakovos Nafpliotis.²⁴

C. The Constantinopolitans' contribution

The contribution of the Constantinopolitan chanters to the development of the ecclesiastical music tradition of Thessaloniki is documented in four major domains, which of course have to do with the part of their life that followed their migration to Thessaloniki. The first domain is chanting performance: as famous first-cantors, they transmitted to Thessaloniki the distinctive chanting manner of Constantinople. At the moment of their arrival, they were immediately seen as expert musicians. Their higher music education and undisputed former practical experience distinguished them and helped them get appointments very rapidly to the city's greatest church parishes. They were regarded as the notorious custodians of the patriarchal performing style. Their tremendous talent and enormous vocal qualifications made them able to be heard without a microphone in large churches. Another common feature, deriving from their educational method in the Music School, was their capability to chant all classical lessons by heart, for they were able to perform the hymns without the use of musical or even liturgical books.²⁵ Dimitrios Vafeiadis is said to have arrived a fugitive in Thessaloniki, after killing one of the Sultan's aides in a quarrel, although he was under his favour, during his days as a first-cantor in Constantinople.²⁶ He is cited as first-cantor of Hypapanti in 1926, from which church he left for Acheiropoiitos in 1930-1933, switching parishes with Pringos. After a short period in Hagios Konstantinos church in Ippodromio in 1934,²⁷ he returned to Hypapanti, until his retirement in the mid 1950s. Vafeiadis is depicted in a

²³ Ιάκωβος Ναυπλιώτης, *Φόρμιγξ: Ήτοι Συλλογή Ασμάτων και Ωδών των μετενεχθέντων εκ της ευρωπαϊκής μουσικής γραφής εις την καθ' ημάς εκκλησιαστικήν, των δε πρωτοτύπων όλως προς χρήσιν των δημοτικών σχολείων και παντός φιλομούσου* (Κωνσταντινούπολη: Πατριαρχικό Τυπογραφείο, 1894), 239. Θεοδόσιος Γεωργιάδης, *Η Νέα Μούσα: Συνοπτική ιστορική τεχνική μουσική μελέτη* (Κωνσταντινούπολη: Μ. Δημητριάδης, 1936), 77. Θεοδόσιος Γεωργιάδης, *Ο Βυζαντινός Μουσικός Πλούτος: Νέα Μέθοδος της καθ' ημάς Εκκλησιαστικής Βυζαντινής Μουσικής* (Αθήνα: Εθνικό Τυπογραφείο, 1963), 144. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 27; Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 136, 168.

²⁴ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 133, 141.

²⁵ This is particularly mentioned for the chanters who followed the so-called 'method' or system of the great teacher Iakovos Nafpliotis, namely Pringos, Daffas and Panagiotidis, but also for Themistoklis Georgiadis, who was a pupil of Nileas Kamarados. See Αστέριος Δεβρελής, *Μορφές: Οι Πολύφωτοι Αστέρες της Πανιέρου Ψαλτικής Επιστήμης οι διαλάμψαντες κατά τον Κ' αιώνα* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Π. & Ι. Μουγκός, 2014), 8, 24, 106; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 40.

²⁶ Charalambos Symeonidis, Interview to author, Athens, June 30, 2017. See below page 406.

²⁷ Θεμιστοκλής Γεωργιάδης, *Νέον Δοξαστάριον* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Χρ. Νικολαΐδης, 1934), 414.

photograph (figure 3) taken in October 1948, leading the sixty-member choir of chanters, during the worship festivals celebrating Hagios Dimitrios' church re-opening, after its destruction from the great fire of 1917.²⁸ His place in the first row, between Charilaos Taliadoros and Athanasios Karamanis, indicates his recognition as the greatest cantor of Thessaloniki at the time. Sokratis Papadopoulos was appointed first-cantor of Hagia Triada church upon his arrival in Thessaloniki. He always chanted accompanied by a chorus of his pupils.²⁹ Konstantinos Pringos was hired as first-cantor in Acheiropoiitos (1929-1930) and Hypapanti (1930-1933) respectively. He was invited to religious feasts and festivals all over the city, most particularly in almost every summer after the year 1945, where a lot of chanters gathered to hear his performance. He had a long and prosperous partnership with Athanasios Panagiotidis in Hypapanti church and other occasions, like the famous celebration of Profitis Ilias, patron saint of the Bakers Union, in Hagios Minas church in the summer of 1957. Pringos is depicted amidst his friends, followers, admirers, and other chanters of Thessaloniki, in a photograph (figure 4) taken at Hagios Grigorios Palamas courtyard, on a Sunday of July 1954, when he was invited to perform, with Athanasios Karamanis as left choir cantor.³⁰ Georgios Daffas's debut in Thessaloniki was at the famous Vesper of Hypapanti, February 1, 1932, when he was specially invited from Constantinople to face Pringos, as a left choir cantor.³¹ After his success he was appointed successively in numerous churches of Thessaloniki, namely Analipsi (ca. 1932-1940), Hagios Therapontas (ca. 1940-1942), Hagios Georgios in Neapoli (ca. 1942-1951), Hagia Sofia (1951-1953), and Hagioi Apostoloi (1953-1976).³² According to his last left cantor and partner Grigorios Asvestas, Daffas possessed the extraordinary capability of performing all kind of hymns by heart.³³ Athanasios Panagiotidis arrived in Thessaloniki in 1933. During the war he sought his fortune in the country, like many other chanters, getting appointments in villages, where he was very much appreciated by Constantinopolitan and other parish

²⁸ Ιεροδιάκονος Γεώργιος Χ. Χρυσοστόμου, "Η αναστήλωση και τα εγκαίνια του ιερού ναού Αγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης: Παρουσίαση ανέκδοτου αρχιερακού υλικού," in *Προσφορά Παντελεήμονι Β' τω Παναγιωτάτω Μητροπολίτη Θεσσαλονίκης επί τη Εικοσιπενταετηρίδι της Αρχιερατείας αυτού*, ed. Χ. Κοντάκης and Π. Κουρούνης (Θεσσαλονίκη, 1990), 576, 625.

²⁹ Δημήτριος Σ. Κουτσαρδάκης, *Τα μυρίπνοα άνθη*, vol. 1 (Πάτρα, 1929), 140. Γεωργιάδης, *Νέον Δοξαστάριον*, 415. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 136. *Ηχώ του Βυζαντίου*, *Μηνιαίον όργανον του Σωματείου Ιεροψαλτών Θεσσαλονίκης 'Ιωάννης Δαμασκηνός ο Μελωδός'* 50 (Θεσσαλονίκη, Ιούλιος 1970), 3.

³⁰ Γεωργιάδης, *Νέον Δοξαστάριον*, 77. Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 141-143. Γεωργιάδης, *Ο Βυζαντινός Μουσικός Πλούτος*, 144-145. Χατζόπουλος, "Η εκκλησιαστική μουσική παιδεία," 170-171, 234. Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 22, 26, 28-29, 30, 50, 51. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 87, 104.

³¹ See below page 409.

³² Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 56, 100.

³³ Grigorios Asvestas, Interview to author, Thessaloniki, March 4, 2017. See also above note 25.

commissioners, like the Mouskeftara brothers, in the village Koryfi, about 30 km west of Thessaloniki. From the year 1946 onwards, and during the 1950s, he performed each Sunday at the second Holy Liturgy in Hagios Dimitrios, which was transmitted live on the radio.³⁴ From that period is a rare photograph (figure 5), in which Panagiotidis is depicted with two of his colleagues at the time, Athanasios Karamanis and Charilaos Taliadoros. Between 1944 and 1951, he was first-cantor in Hagia Sofia, chanting each Sunday but only during the Matin, after which a polyphonic chorus performed the Holy Liturgy. Some months after his legendary performance during the Holy Week of 1951 in Hagia Sofia, he was hired in Hagios Grigorios Palamas. In September 1953 he was appointed to Hagios Fanourios, only to leave again in 1954 for the under construction church of Panagia Faneromeni, where he stayed until 1956.³⁵ He was also famous for his ability to chant all lessons by heart, and additionally a famous teaser as he used to turn off the lights and noisily close all the books on the lectern, in order to annoy and frustrate the cantor of the opposite lectern.³⁶

The second field of Constantinopolitan contribution is music education. As great teachers of Byzantine chant, they passed down their knowledge to their students and followers in Thessaloniki, teaching wherever they could, on the lectern during the church service, in proper Music Schools, in chorus rehearsals and, on rare occasions, in private lessons. The first official music education institution of the 20th century was founded in the patriarchal Monastery of Hagia Anastasia Farmakolytria, about 30 km southeast of Thessaloniki, with a Royal Decree in 1918, as a hieratic school for Greek Orthodox priests, and started to operate on September 16, 1919. In the same monastery, a small elementary school for boys, where music was also taught, had already been operational from the mid 19th century, according to a citation of its cantor and teacher Anastasios Dimitriadis in the subscribers lists of a classical music edition of Constantinople.³⁷ However, in the year 1919 Themistoklis Georgiadis was appointed by a formal patriarchal letter (*pittakion*) teacher of Byzantine chant in the school.³⁸ This placement, which consists yet another confirmation of the strong music bond between Thessaloniki and Constantinople at the time, assured that all students of the school would take the proper music lessons approved by the Patriarchate, and would therefore adopt the genuine patriarchal chanting manner. Georgiadis is depicted in a photograph (Figure 6) sitting first at the left-hand end of the row, along

³⁴ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 44.

³⁵ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 57, 133. Γεωργιάδης, *Ο Βυζαντινός Μουσικός Πλούτος*, 161. Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 39-40, 41, 42-43, 68, 69-70. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 95, 99, 106, 123, 124.

³⁶ Id., *Μορφές*, 45. See also above note 25.

³⁷ Ιωάννης Λαμπαδάριος - Στέφανος Α' Δομέστικος, *Πανδέκτη*, vol. 4 (Κωνσταντινούπολη, 1851), 906.

³⁸ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 102.

with the teachers of the School and the graduates of the 1939-1940 academic year. In 1945 the school was declared by state law a seven-year ecclesiastical high school, and was in operation until 1971 as such, when it was shut down, simultaneously with the Theological School of Chalki.³⁹ Georgiadis is said to have been capable of writing down on the blackboard all daily music lessons by heart, for his students to copy them.⁴⁰ In his twenty-six years as a teacher he made thousands of written manuscripts for his pupils, saving this way many of his teacher's Nileas Kamarados lessons, whose analytical writing system he followed.⁴¹ He also prepared a weekly programme for the participation of the students in the lectern.⁴² Konstantinos Mpekiaris was also appointed teacher in the school of Saint Anastasia Monastery, along with his best friend Themistoklis Georgiadis. He performed in the Holy Week of 1951 in the Monastery's church.⁴³ He was later, in the mid 1950s, appointed teacher of Ritual and Hymnology in the Ecclesiastical *Frontistirion* of Thessaloniki.⁴⁴ In an article published on November 13, 1930 in the newspaper *Makedonia*, the foundation of a Music School exclusively for church music in the urban centre of Thessaloniki, with Konstantinos Pringos, who was first-cantor of Hypapanti at the time, as director was announced.⁴⁵ Some Constantinopolitan teachers had private students as well. Kyriakos Papadopoulos-Symeonidis, former first-cantor of Hagia Aikaterini church of Thessaloniki, was the only known pupil of Dimitrios Vafeiadis, who, after the testimony of his pupil's son, was particularly demanding, cruel and expensive as a teacher.⁴⁶ Chryssanthos Theodosopoulos was the most famous of all students of Sokratis Papadopoulos.⁴⁷ However, Konstantinos Pringos is said to have had the majority of the chanters in Thessaloniki as his listeners and followers. Among his closest pupils and friends were Dimitrios Mitros, Athanasios Psychas, Christoforos Koutsouradis, Athanasios Politis, Apostolos Kontogeorgis, and of course the much younger and talented Charilaos Taliadoros.⁴⁸ Georgios Daffas is also cited as a great teacher of Byzantine music in Thessaloniki.⁴⁹ Athanasios Panagiotidis was a very

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 103; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 15.

⁴⁰ See above note 25.

⁴¹ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 99, 101, 107. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 27, 42.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁴ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 168; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 65.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 91; Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 28. Unfortunately this music school didn't manage to last for a long time.

⁴⁶ Charalambos Symeonidis, Interview to author, Athens, June 30, 2017.

⁴⁷ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 136.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 143; Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 29-30; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 89-90.

⁴⁹ Γεωργιάδης, *Ο Βυζαντινός Μουσικός Πλούτος*, 166.

successful chorus director. He directed the 'Byzantine Chorus of Thessaloniki' in Athens on December 29, 1950 and details of this event were published in the press.⁵⁰ Even greater however was the performance of the forty-cantors chorus, some of which were Constantinopolitans, that Panagiotidis directed in Thessaloniki's Royal Theatre in 1955.⁵¹ In another historical recording Panagiotidis directed a chorus of twenty of his pupils performing the *Kassiani's Troparion* in Hagios Fanourios church, on the Great and Holy Tuesday of 1965.⁵² Panagiotidis had also delivered private music lessons in Athens around 1960.⁵³

The third area of Constantinopolitan involvement to the development of Thessaloniki's church music tradition is music books editions. Such a connection between Constantinople and Thessaloniki had already existed, as is evidenced by three music books published by Constantinopolitans in Thessaloniki during the third quarter of the 19th century. Alexandros Fokaeas, son of the famous cantor and music book editor Theodoros Fokaeas, published his *Mousikon Engolpion* in Thessaloniki in 1869. The success his music book met among the cantors of Thessaloniki did not only lead the author to a publication of a second book, *Neon Anastasimatarion* in 1878, but also to a second edition of his *Mousikon Engolpion* in 1879. Seven years later, the bond between Constantinople and Thessaloniki was tightened due to another incident, which manifested at the same time the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople over the musical tradition of the Orthodox Church and its role as protector of the genuine chanting style.⁵⁴ In 1886, the three-member special commission formed by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate banned the use of the *Engolpion Ieropsaltou* published by the chanter Dimitris Voulgarakis, demanding its rejection from the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki Grigorios Kallidis. The book, which was only locally circulated, was condemned due to its corruption of the ancient traditional *hyphos*, through the alteration of the ancient original forms of the ecclesiastic chants.⁵⁵ In general, music authors often recorded in their editions, publications and hand-written manuscripts, their own aspect or interpretation over the traditional classical lessons, elaborating or sometimes evolving their teachers compositions according to their personal musical approach. A closer look at Voulgarakis' edition however is persuasive of the inventions and foreign influences, which pushed him outside the borders of Constantinopolitan music tradition, revealing, at the same time, his contacts with chanters from Smyrna and Athens. One

⁵⁰ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 39; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 105-109. See also Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 162.

⁵¹ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 55.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 85; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 134.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 130; Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 74, 85.

⁵⁴ Erol, "The Musical Question," 148, 154.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

year later, the unfortunate publisher, first-cantor of Hagios Nikolaos Tranos church and a great music personality of 19th century Thessaloniki, died.⁵⁶

Themistoklis Georgiadis' hand-written *Syllogi Ekklesiastikon Asmaton*, that circulated in 1929, as well as his book *Neon Doxastarion*, published in 1934, were based in the so-called method of Nileas Kamarados.⁵⁷ Sokratis Papadopoulos followed in 1950 with his three-volume *Nea Forminx tis Ekklesias*, which contained lessons from Greek Orthodox Vesper, Matin and Holy Liturgy respectively.⁵⁸ The lack of proper typographical characters of Byzantine chant, mentioned in the introduction of the former music edition, was solved by the typographer and cantor Christos Nikolaidis, who ordered and had the complete series of church music notation symbols delivered from Venice. After moving from Tsimiski 9 to Egnatia 95 street, the same publishing house, where Georgiadis' 1934 book was printed, also printed in 1952 and 1953 Konstantinos Pringos' three-part series *Patriarchal Phorminx* comprising *Doxastarion*, *Anastasimatarion* and *Megali Evdomas*, edited by Avraam Euthymiadis and Chryssanthos Theodosopoulos. A couple of years later, in 1955, Athanasios Panagiotidis' *Epitomon Anastasimatarion* and a booklet containing the music lessons of *Vyzantini Symfonia* in the Royal Theatre of Thessaloniki were also printed there.⁵⁹ Next to the published works, a great number of hand-written manuscripts of several Constantinopolitans containing widespread music compositions, mainly *doxastika*, *cherubica*, and *leitourgika*, was distributed hand to hand among the chanters of Thessaloniki. A *cherubic hymn* of Dimitrios Vafeiadis in plagal forth mode recorded by his pupil Kyriakos Papadopoulos Symeonidis, is said to have had a lot in common with Konstantinos Pringos' compositions.⁶⁰ Vafeiadis is also said to have kept a hand-written manuscript of 466 pages, containing, among other known music lessons, some unpublished *cherubica*, *leitourgika* and *koinonika* of Asterios Stereos and Stamoulis Zarkinos. Konstantinos Mpekiaris composed a wellknown hymn in honour of Hagios Ioannis Damaskinos, while a *trisagion* in plagal first mode and a *dynamis* in first mode, from the manuscripts of the Athanasios Politis' collection, are attributed to Georgios Daffas.

The fourth territory of Constantinopolitan contribution is social activity. They supported musical or cultural associations and participated in charity organisations and parish church boards as commissioners. Established in 1903 as a voluntary musical association, the Chanters Union of Thessaloniki with Metropolitan of

⁵⁶ Αλέξανδρος Φωκαέας, *Μουσικόν Εγκόλπιον* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Θάνου και Βασιλειάδη, 1869) 659. Γεώργιος Ι. Παπαδόπουλος, *Συμβολαί εις την Ιστορίαν της παρ' ημίν Εκκλησιαστικής Μουσικής* (Αθήνα: Κουσουλίδου & Αθανασιάδου, 1890), 359, 486 note 1337. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 173, 223.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 72; Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 99.

⁵⁸ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 136-137.

⁵⁹ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 39, 55-56. Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 72.

⁶⁰ Charalambos Symeonidis, Interview to author, Athens, June 30, 2017.

Thessaloniki Athanasios Megaklis as honorary president, basically followed the example of the Musical Society of Constantinople founded in 1863 by prominent members of the Greek Orthodox literate community with important social and political power, as well as numerous chanters employed in various churches of the city.⁶¹ In 1918 the Chanters Union issued a statute declaring its founding aim and goals. The Constantinopolitans took over as soon as they arrived in Thessaloniki and jump-started the Chanters Union, giving at first free lessons of proper music instruction to its members. As in Constantinople, all chanters began to assemble in their musical association in order to improve their chanting practice.⁶² All Chanters Union of Thessaloniki members of the year 1930, among which Vafeiadis, Papadopoulos, Pringos and a few other Constantinopolitans, are depicted in a photograph (figure 7) kept in the union's archive. At the same time the Constantinopolitans organised as many events and music festivals as they could with the support and funding of the Union of Constantinopolitans, migrant merchants, some of which were chanters.⁶³ They finally began circulating a chanters' newspaper called *Echo of Byzantium* at the end of the 1960s, with the ambition to sensitise the public opinion on the issues that troubled their community. Sokratis Papadopoulos was among the founding members of the Chanters Union, acting as president in various periods and giving lectures during festival performances of the union's chorus, as in the event hosted by the 'Society of the Friends of Byzantine Music' in Athens on June 3, 1951; unfortunately his death in 1953 didn't allow him to see his dream of publishing a cantors magazine fulfilled.⁶⁴ Dimitrios Vafeiadis was also among the Constantinopolitans elected as board members of the Chanters Union, on the elections of December 21, 1930. Georgios Daffas has also served as a board member, while Konstantinos Pringos and Athanasios Panagiotidis have also supported the Chanters Union, after their arrival from Constantinople. Other distinguished Constantinopolitan members of the Chanters Union are the chairmen Konstantinos Chalisoglou and Nikolaos Metassarakis, first-cantors of Nea Panagia and Acheiropoiitos respectively, as well as the great teacher Christoforos Koutsouradis, first-cantor of Hagios Eleftherios.⁶⁵

Although not all Constantinopolitans were chanters, their music education, extensive experience and family traditions made them at least capable of respecting and

⁶¹ Φόρμιγξ, *Μουσική Εφημερίς Εικονογραφημένη* 2.2, ed. Ιωάννης Θ. Τσώκλης (Αθήνα: January 30, 1903), 3. Κυριαζίδης, *Αι δύο μέλισσαι*, 715. Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 51. Erol, "The Musical Question," 144. A musical society was already established in the freed city of Athens in 1873, a decade after the formation of the Musical Society of Constantinople: see Erol, "The Musical Question," 148.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 143 note 15.

⁶³ Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 51, 67.

⁶⁴ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 136.

⁶⁵ See Δεβρελής, *Μορφές*, 51-53.

appreciating a gifted chanter. Some of them managed to make a great deal of money by engaging in the trading business or building their own careers as doctors, lawyers, teachers, bankers, publishers and journalists. These prominent merchants or private businessmen, who were the wealthiest and most generous members of the Greek Orthodox community, often financed the social initiatives undertaken by the parishes or even actually joined the commissions in their churches and managed to be appointed church board members.⁶⁶ Those who had such experience from their time in Constantinople, offered their services to a parish after their arrival in Thessaloniki. Among the considerations of the community's notables who sat on church boards was the performance of the divine service taking place in their parish. Consequently, one of their main responsibilities was the improving of liturgical music and the appointment of the appropriate cantors, who were directly involved in performing the holy liturgy. In order to attract congregation and therefore increase their parish income, they were focused on appointing the best chanters and choir leaders. They often invited famous first-cantors upon an agreed reward to great feasts and festivals making the proper announcements in the newspapers. Until the 1970's the church board members were all laypeople, not clerics, elected every five years from the parish, with financial management jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the appointment of the parish church board members has passed during last decades onto high and low-ranking clergy.⁶⁷ The most famous of all commissioners were in the church of Hypapanti, for example Nikiforos, who arranged the mutual transfer between Dimitrios Vafeiadis and Konstantinos Pringos and was, according to Georgios Tsatsaronis' article in the *Ieropsaltika Nea* magazine, the manager of Konstantinos Pringos. Konstantinidis was another well known commissioner, who used to criticise and drive out of the church every member of the congregation that donated coins instead of notes for the great chanter Pringos.⁶⁸ Other known Constantinopolitan commissioners were Konstantinos Oikonomou, chairman of the Bakers' Union of Thessaloniki and major patron of chanters, who is depicted standing in the middle, between Konstantinos Pringos and Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas in a famous picture taken in the Patriarchate,⁶⁹ Spyridon Theodoridis, also chairman of the Bakers' Union and personal friend of Konstantinos Pringos and Georgios Daffas, whose house used to be the meeting point of all admirers of Byzantine chant, Ilias Politis, father of the collector of Konstantinos Pringos' manuscripts Athanasios Politis, and Theodosios Sakellariou, board member of Hagios Fanourios church.

⁶⁶ Erol, "The Musical Question," 139-141.

⁶⁷ Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 125.

⁶⁸ Charilaos Taliadoros, Interview to author, Thessaloniki, September 29, 2016.

⁶⁹ Αντωνέλλης, *Η Βυζαντινή Εκκλησιαστική Μουσική*, 219; Δεβρελής, *Μνήμες*, 86.

D. The Constantinopolitans' legacy

The dominant presence of the Constantinopolitan immigrant chanters had a great impact on the evolution of church life in 20th century Thessaloniki, changing the people's perception and preferences towards the liturgical music of the Greek Orthodox church. Their contribution to the development of the ecclesiastical music tradition of Thessaloniki is documented in the domains of chanting performance, music education, music books publishing and social activity. Their legacy is still detected in today's chanting life, not only in the repertoire of the chanted lessons still in use in Thessaloniki's churches, but also in the acquired chanting *hyphos* of modern day chanters.

Not many years after their arrival in Thessaloniki, the Constantinopolitans managed to overthrow all former publications with their own music editions. It is also very interesting to note that Iakovos Nafpliotis' interpretations, as they were executed by his student Konstantinos Pringos, had finally prevailed over those of Nileas Kamarados, although the latter were circulating earlier in Thessaloniki; that is mainly documented by Pringos' pupils Themistoklis Georgiadis and Sokratis Papadopoulos. More precisely, the majority of compositions attributed to Konstantinos Pringos, whose most genuine versions are to be found in the books of his close students and listeners, that is Charilaos Taliadoros, Athanasios Karamanis and Chryssanthos Theodosopoulos, remain until today live and active in everyday liturgical use. This isn't the case though for the lessons of Themistoklis Georgiadis and Sokratis Papadopoulos, few of which were incorporated into the modern editions of their pupils Asterios Devrelis and Chryssanthos Theodosopoulos respectively.

Since Greek Orthodox Church Music is transmitted mainly by ear and phonetic instruction from teacher to student, the uppermost important feature in every local music tradition revolves around its chanters 'hearings' and acoustic experience in general, and the amount of success in their effort to adopt the chanting manner of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This was succeeded by the generation of pupils of the Constantinopolitans who arrived in Thessaloniki during the first half of the 20th century, for they developed a certain style, which resembles that of the Great Church, and as teachers passed it down to their own students. As communicated to me by Antonios Chatzopoulos, his teacher, the late *Archon Protopsaltis of the Great Church of Christ*, Vasileios Nikolaidis, used to say that "*today's cantors of Thessaloniki perform the hymns exactly like us*", including in fact, in his own music editions, a few traditional music positions as they were recorded by Athanasios Karamanis. Konstantinos Pringos states exactly the same for his best and most vocally gifted student Charilaos Taliadoros.

This paper is dedicated to the memory of all Constantinopolitans, who shaped to a greater or lesser extent, the contemporary chanting tradition of Thessaloniki.

Figures

Figure 1.

Georgios Daffas, standing first from the left in the top row, with teachers and graduates of the Music School of the Ecclesiastical Musical Society of Constantinople from the 1922-1923 academic year.

Source: Friends of Music Club of Pera.

Reproduced by courtesy of Antonios Chatzopoulos.



Figure 2.

Music School Diploma of Georgios Daffas, May 1923.
Source: Georgios Daffas' archive. Reproduced by courtesy of Maria Daffa.



Figure 3.

Dimitrios Vafeiadis, second from the left, between Charilaos Taliadoros and Athanasios Karamanis, with chanters of Thessaloniki during the celebration of Hagios Dimitrios' church re-opening, October 1948.

Source: Charilaos Taliadoros' archive.

Reproduced by courtesy of Charilaos Taliadoros.



Figure 4.

Konstantinos Pringos, in the middle, with chanters of Thessaloniki, Hagios Grigorios Palamas courtyard, July 1954.

Source: Asterios Devrelis' archive.

Reproduced by courtesy of Asterios Devrelis.



Figure 5.

Athanasios Karamanis, Charilaos Taliadoros and Athanasios Panagiotidis.
Thessaloniki, after 1946.

Source: Charilaos Taliadoros' archive.

Reproduced by courtesy of Charilaos Taliadoros.



Figure 6.

Themistoklis Georgiadis, seated, first from the left, with teachers and graduates of the Hagia Anastasia School, from the 1939-1940 academic year.

Source: Κόλλιας Σήφης, ed. *Εκκλησιαστική Σχολή Αγίας Αναστασίας 1919-1960*.

Θεσσαλονίκη: Βαφειάδης, 1960.

Reproduced by courtesy of Graduates Society, Ecclesiastical School of Hagia Anastasia.



Figure 7.

The Constantinopolitans Dimitrios Vafeiadis, seated fifth from the left, Sokratis Papadopoulos, seated seventh from the left, and Konstantinos Pringos, seated fifth from the right, as members of the Chanters Union of Thessaloniki 'Ioannis o Damaskinos', Thessaloniki, 1930.

Source: Chanters Union of Thessaloniki archive.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Chanters Union of Thessaloniki, board of trustees.



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Biography: **Panagiotis Chovardas** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Music Studies at the Ionian University (Thesis: *Byzantine chanting life in Thessaloniki during the 19th and 20th centuries, from historical sources*, Supervisor Professor Dimitris Giannelos). Introduced to the ecclesiastical chant by his grandfather, a Greek Orthodox priest, he graduated from the Metropolitan Byzantine Music School of Thessaloniki and stayed close to the great teacher Charilaos Taliadoros. He was tonsured *Anagnostis* and currently serves as *Lampadarios* of the Metropolitan Church of Saint Gregory Palamas in Thessaloniki, and President of the Byzantine Chanters Union of Thessaloniki. He is married with three children.